

# IRS Fact Sheet

---

Media Relations Office

Washington, D.C.

Media Contact: 202.622.4000

[www.IRS.gov/newsroom](http://www.IRS.gov/newsroom)

Public Contact: 800.829.1040

---

## IRS Offers Free Tax Help

FS-2009-6, January 2009

Free tax help is available from the Internal Revenue Service for taxpayers by telephone, in person and via the Internet where information is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### IRS.gov

When seeking help over the Internet, the IRS cautions taxpayers to make sure to go to the authentic [IRS Web site](http://www.IRS.gov) by typing [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov) into their browser. The official Web site does not end in .com, .net, .org or any other designation. Click on “Español” for content in Spanish.

Taxpayers should check out “[1040 Central](#)” for all the latest updates and information needed to prepare and file their 2008 returns. Taxpayers can readily access forms and instructions from this section of the Web site.

In the Online Tools section, taxpayers can access numerous applications to help with their taxes, including:

- “[Free File](#)”, which is a fast, free and easy way to prepare and file a tax return, if adjusted gross income is \$56,000 or less 2008;
- “[IRS Withholding Calculator](#)”, which helps taxpayers make sure the amount of income tax they have withheld from their pay isn’t too high or too low;
- “[Find An Authorized E-File Provider](#)”, which helps individual taxpayers find someone who can electronically file their tax return;
- “[Alternative Minimum Tax \(AMT\) Assistant](#)”, which can be used to determine whether a taxpayer may be subject to the AMT;
- “[EITC Assistant - Available in English and Spanish](#)”, which helps taxpayers find out if they are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit;
- “[Sales Tax Deduction Calculator](#)”, which is available to help taxpayers prepare their returns;
- “[Electronic Federal Tax Payment System](#)”, which enable taxpayers to pay their tax online; and
- “[Online Payment Agreement](#)”, which is for taxpayers who cannot pay their tax completely by April 15.

Taxpayers may also check their 2008 refund online using [“Where's My Refund?”](#) 72 hours after IRS acknowledges receipt of an e-filed return or three to four weeks after a return is mailed. Taxpayers will need to enter a Social Security number (or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number), filing status (such as single or married filing jointly) and the exact whole dollar amount of the refund shown on their 2008 tax return. In addition to the status of their refund payment, they will receive instructions to resolve refund-related problems. The “Where's My Refund?” tool is available in English and Spanish.

Taxpayers will have two tools to help them determine if they are eligible for a Recovery Rebate Credit. Most people already received this benefit in 2008 in the form of the economic stimulus payment. However, if certain conditions changed for taxpayers in 2008, they may be eligible for an additional one-time benefit. Taxpayers can use the online tools: “How Much Was My 2008 Stimulus Payment?” and the “Recovery Rebate Calculator.”

### **Telephone**

Taxpayers may also order current and prior year tax forms, instructions and publications by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). Taxpayers may ask tax questions by calling the toll-free customer service line at 1-800-829-1040 for individual tax issues or 1-800-829-4933 for business-related tax issues. TTY/TDD users may call 1-800-829-4059 to ask tax questions or to order forms and publications.

Taxpayers can also listen to information with little or no waiting by calling TeleTax toll-free at 1-800-829-4477 to hear pre-recorded messages in English or Spanish covering various tax topics or to check on the status of a refund. TeleTax topics, which range from “IRS Assistance” to “Who Must File,” are listed on pages 84 and 85 of the Form 1040 Instructions booklet. In January they will also be able to access “How much was my 2008 stimulus payment?” by calling the Rebate Hotline at 1-866-234-2942.

### **In-Person Assistance with Returns**

Free tax preparation is available through the [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance](#) (VITA) and [Tax Counseling for the Elderly](#) (TCE) sites in many communities. Taxpayers should check community newspapers for VITA site locations or call 1-800-906-9887 for more information. Taxpayers may also call AARP — the largest TCE participant — at 1-888-227-7669 to find the most convenient location.

### **Taxpayer Assistance Centers**

IRS [Taxpayer Assistance Centers](#) are a source of personal tax help when taxpayers believe their tax issues cannot be handled on-line or by phone, and they want face-to-face assistance. IRS representatives in these offices can help with inquiries, adjustments, letters and notices and payment plans for those who owe tax and cannot pay the full amount. Locations are posted on IRS.gov under the “Individuals” tab. Just click the link [Contact My Local Office](#) or type “Contact My Local Office” in the search box on IRS.gov to find availability by state. Also, taxpayers can hear a recorded message detailing office hours and addresses by calling the number listed in their local phone directory.

The IRS provides non-English-speaking taxpayers equal access to all Taxpayer Assistance Centers.

### **Tax Forms and Publications Walk-In Service**

Many post offices and libraries offer IRS tax publications, forms and instructions for pick up. Participation of post offices and libraries changes from year to year so taxpayers should check with their local community organization before making the trip. Electronic kiosks containing commonly-used forms (Form 1040 series) and tax information are available in some locations. All local IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers have tax publications, forms and instructions available to pick up.

### **Braille Tax Material**

A variety of Braille materials may be ordered at no charge by calling the IRS at 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). The Braille print files are in .brf format and can be sent directly to an embosser for high-quality Braille output. Braille materials are available at libraries that have special services for people with disabilities.

### **Taxpayer Advocate Service**

The [Taxpayer Advocate Service](#) (TAS) is an independent organization within the IRS whose employees assist taxpayers who are experiencing economic harm, who are seeking help in resolving tax problems that have not been resolved through normal channels, or who believe that an IRS system or procedure is not working as it should. Taxpayers who believe they are eligible for TAS assistance can reach TAS by calling their toll-free case intake line at 1-877-777-4778 or TTY/TTD 1-800-829-4059.

### **Low Income Taxpayer Clinics (LITCs)**

[Low Income Taxpayer Clinics](#) (LITCs) are independent organizations that provide low income taxpayers with representation in federal tax controversies with the IRS for free or for a nominal charge. The clinics also provide tax education and outreach for taxpayers with limited English proficiency or who speak English as a second language. IRS [Publication 4134, Low Income Taxpayer Clinic List](#), provides information on clinics.

For a comprehensive listing of free tax services, taxpayers can download or order IRS [Publication 910, Guide to Free Tax Services](#).